**Amendment to Payment of Wages Act**

1522. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are proposing to amend the Payment of Wages Act to enable Government to enhance the wage ceiling on the basis of the consumer price index;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed amendment;

(c) whether any consultations have been made with the trade unions in this regard; and

(d) if so, the outcome of the consultations?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRIK CHANDRA SEKHAR. RAO): (a) to (d) The Rajya Sabha has passed the Payment of Wages (Amendment) Bill, 2004 which mainly provides for increasing the wage ceiling from the existing level of Rs. 1600/- to Rs. 6500/- per month, its further enhancement on the basis of quinquenniakConsumer Expenditure Survey of NSSO through notification and increase in penalties, which had also been discussed with all stakeholders.

**VRS in Bharat Gold Mines Limited**

1523. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of workers in Bharat Gold Mines Limited, KGF are yet to cover under Voluntary Retirement Scheme;

(b) whether Govemment have agreed to introduce a new VRS for these remaining workers of BGML;

(c) if so, what would be the cost involved; and

(d) by when, the above new VRS be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) There are 3100 employees in Bharat Gold Mines Limited (BGML) who may opt for Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) as and when it is decided to he opened.